

the past is behind us, now by iridescentpetrichor

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Summary:

Your eyes snapped open, frantically darting around your bedroom as you took in your surroundings. You're okay, you struggled to remind yourself, trying to stop the shaking in your body. The Russians are gone. Starcourt is gone. You sat up, wiping tears from your eyes. Taking a deep breath, you climbed out of your bed and walked towards your landline.

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Fireworks rain down around you and your friends as the mind flayer stood in the middle of Starcourt Mall. The bright lights erupted around the room, it was hard to focus on anything for too long and it felt like you were underwater as you desperately tried to fight the creature that caused so much damage to your hometown. You reached down to grab another firework, only to find that you'd run out. Glancing up towards the others, you saw the same was true for everyone else. The mind flayer was still very much alive, and instead of focusing its attention on Eleven and Billy, it's mangled face looked up to the balcony where Steve and Robin stood.

The two of them barely had time to react before the monster's tendrils shot out, piercing through their bodies wherever it could. Screams from you and the others echoed off the walls as you watched the mind flayer rip your friends apart. When it released them, their lifeless bodies fell to the ground, out of sight.

Your eyes snapped open, frantically darting around your bedroom as you took in your surroundings. *You're okay*, you struggled to remind yourself, trying to stop the shaking in your body. *The Russians are gone. Starcourt is gone.* You sat up, wiping tears from your eyes. Taking a deep breath, you climbed out of your bed and walked towards your landline. It was routine by now; you'd have a nightmare and rush to call your friend Jonathan to come spend the night.

You'd already began to dial the Byers' phone number before your heart sunk.

The Byers moved to Maine last week.

Cursing under your breath, you continued your struggle to calm yourself down.

You hadn't even realized you'd dialed a new number until you heard the phone ringing.

"Hello?" You could tell from his voice that Steve was already awake,

likely trying to distract himself from the memories that plagued you both.

“Hey, I uh-” You swallowed. “I can’t sleep.”

“Need me to come over?”

“Yes please.” Breathing a sigh of relief, you heard some shuffling on the other line.

“On my way, be there in five.” With that, he hung up.

You turned on all the lights in the living room and curled up on the couch as you waited for Steve to show up. True to his word, it only took five minutes before you heard a car pulling up in your driveway. You jumped up, rushing to open the door, seeing Steve slamming shut the door of his car and turning to see you waiting for him.

As he walks closer, you can truly see the darkness of the bags under his eyes. Instinctively, a hand came up to gently bring his face closer to yours to inspect the dark circles.

“Steve, have you even been sleeping?” Your voice is quiet, laced with concern.

He hesitates before responding, making you realize just how close the two of you actually were. “Uh,” He lets out a nervous chuckle as the two of you each take a step back, before he follows you into your house. “No, not really.”

You give him a playful glare, grabbing his wrist and pulling him into your bedroom without a second thought. “You need to get some rest.”

“Isn’t that the reason you called me?” He laughs, trying to break the tension as the two of you stood in front of the bed. You shifted your weight, avoiding his eyes before climbing into bed. Steve’s laughter halted, seeing you pull the covers over you as he realized what was about to happen.

“Uh-”

“Just get in here, Harrington.” You said, smiling. Leaning back casually, you tried to will the blush on your face to disappear when Steve climbed in next to you.

The silence between the two of you was suffocating, and you could feel how tense Steve was from your spot on the bed. A few more moments passed with tension you could cut with a knife, until you couldn’t take it anymore.

“You can scoot closer, you know. I don’t bite, Steve.”

He hesitated for a moment, before moving closer. You did the same, resting your head on his shoulder, feeling him relax. It didn’t take long before your eyes grew heavy, and you drifted off, finally calm in Steve’s comforting presence.

Sunlight streamed through your window, lighting up your room as you opened your eyes, blinking the sleep from your eyes. You felt a pair of arms around you, craning your neck to see Steve snuggled into you. From your movement, he stirred, quickly moving away from you when he realized where he was.

“Good morning.” You mumbled, sitting up in the bed.

“God, what time is it?” Steve asked, leaning over you to see the clock on your bedside table.

“Late,” You said, “but I think you needed the rest.” He nodded slowly, humming in response, without taking his eyes off you. You felt heat creeping up to your face under Steve’s gaze, a smile on your face. “What?”

He smiled lightly, and you didn’t miss how his face flushed when he looked away, eyes falling on his lap as he fiddled with his hands. “Nothing.”

You chuckled, leaning back as the two of you fell into a comfortable silence.

After a minute passed, Steve broke the silence.

“Why did you call me?” He continued to look at his hands, refusing

to look at you.

“What?”

“I mean, you could’ve called anyone. Nancy, or Robin, maybe. Why me?”

You honestly weren’t even sure of that, yourself. It just seemed like second nature to call him of all people. “I uh- I don’t know honestly.”

Steve nodded slowly, picking at the skin around his nails. “Well, I’m glad you called me.” He said, finally looking up at you. You could tell he wanted to say more, but he refrained.

You couldn’t help smiling at him, hoping the blush on your face wasn’t as prominent as it felt. “I’m glad I called you, too.”